



Delinquency Prevention

Created by Bellarmine University
Students

Bhavik Patel, Linh Nguyen,
Julien Allen, Caitlin Sizemore,
Starr Amar



What is Delinquency?



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- Minor crimes committed by young people (Oxford Languages, 2020)
 - Habitual committing of criminal acts or offenses by a young person, especially one below the age at which ordinary criminal prosecution is possible. (Oxford Languages, 2020)
- People of color and/or those in poverty are usually the most affected

School to Prison Pipeline



- **Most prisoners enter the criminal justice system at a very young age, when they're still in school (Camera, 2021).**
- **Trauma or abuse commonly carries over into a juvenile's school life.**
- **School is an important part of who we are: we spend several hours there!**
 - How we find and connect with mentors, friends, and interests
 - It shapes our identity!
 - **They generally perform poorly, whether behaviorally, socially, or academically. (Camera, 2021)**

\$112,555

**Annual cost of youth incarceration for a
single individual**

How Can This Relate to JJAB?

Juvenile Delinquency in Louisville, Kentucky

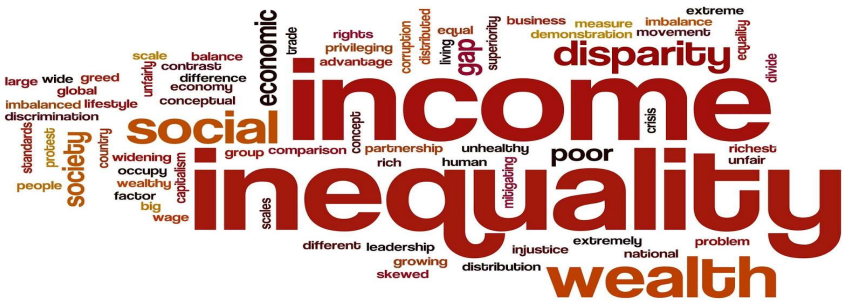
- In 2019, in order to make millions of dollars in budget cuts, the Louisville Metro abruptly **closed the Youth Detention Services.** (Duvall & Costello, 2021)
- Now In 2021, elected officials fear that they are being faced with the unintended consequences of that decision.
- **Increased crime and juvenile delinquency.** (Duvall & Costello, 2021)
- With all these consequences and the demographics of delinquency, Kentucky's leaders are realizing that something needs to be done. (Duvall & Costello, 2021)
- All these factors mean that it is the perfect time delinquency prevention practices to be enacted!



“As a system, as a community, we should be responding to kids who find themselves in trouble, as a point of intervention. What replaced youth detention? Because I’m not sure I know.”

-Nicole George, councilwoman (Duvall & Costello, 2021).

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Neighborhood Disadvantage

An example of this disadvantage can be seen when comparing the West End of Louisville to the East End.

- **Recent research**
 - **Neighborhood structure can affect child development and can lead adolescents to be more frequently involved with crime and delinquency**
 - **Children raised in areas of extremely low levels of socioeconomic disadvantage and inequality**
 - **Negative outcomes can further increase likelihood of participating in criminal activity**
 - **Children raised under such conditions**
 - **Risk for dropping out of school, lower school achievement, decreased verbal ability, and many other problems**
- **(Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000).**

How Can We Help?

Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Programs

Throughout the years, there have been many programs to fight juvenile delinquency.



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In order to make a positive impact in the field of juvenile delinquency, we need to see which programs are and are not working.



What Isn't Working With Delinquency Prevention?



What Isn't Working With Delinquency Prevention

Scared Straight

- When a delinquent acts out in undesirable ways, they are taken to a prison or jail to be scared into not wanting to go into prisons or jails.
- The incarcerated individuals try to intimidate and scare them by yelling, harassing, and saying all the terrible things they would do to them.
- "Randomized trials in the United States, including an analysis of the original New Jersey Scared Straight program, reveal no effect on the delinquent/criminal behavior of participants who went through the program when compared with those who did not" (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2011, p.1).
- Delinquent outcomes have risen from 1% to 28% for youths that went through the Scared Straight Program versus those who did not go through the program.



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“Research by the Washington State Institute on Public Policy found that for every \$80 spent on Scared Straight Programs, taxpayers and crime victims pay an additional \$14,000 associated with youths’ recurring contact with the juvenile and criminal justice systems” (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2007)

This provides evidence that Scared Straight Programs and scare tactics in general are expensive and ineffective in preventing youth from interacting with the juvenile justice system and becoming delinquent.

Policing

Deterrence vs. Labelling

- **Deterrence:** prevention through proactive police strategies (Wiley and Esbensen, 2016)
 - Higher risk of capture leads to fewer crimes
- **Labelling:** proactive policing labels youths as delinquents, causing an increase in crime (Wiley and Esbensen, 2016)
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy leads to higher crimes



**What can be done to prevent Juvenile
Delinquency?**



ODDJP's Comprehensive Strategy (The Big Picture)

ODDJP has developed a comprehensive strategy to prevent juvenile delinquency based on the following factors.

1. **Families:** "We must strengthen the family in its primary responsibility to instill moral values and provide guidance and support to children. Where there is no functional family unit, we must establish a family surrogate and help that entity to guide and nurture the child" (Howell et al., p. 3, 2014)



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2. **Institutions:** "We must support core social institutions such as schools, religious institutions, and community organizations in their roles of developing capable, mature, and responsible youth. A goal of each of these societal institutions should be to ensure that children have the opportunity and support to mature into productive, law-abiding citizens. In a nurturing community environment, core social institutions are actively involved in the lives of youth" (Howell et al., p. 4, 2015)

ODDJP's Comprehensive Strategy

3. Collaboration: We must promote delinquency prevention as the most cost-effective approach to reducing juvenile delinquency. Families, schools, religious institutions, and community organizations, including citizen volunteers and the private sector, should come together for the nation's delinquency prevention efforts" (Howell et al., p. 4, 2014).

4. Intervention: "We must intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs to prevent delinquent offenders from becoming chronic offenders or committing progressively more serious and violent crimes. Initial intervention efforts, under an umbrella of system authorities (police, intake, and probation), should be centered in the family and other core societal institutions." (Howell et al., p. 4, 2014)



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ODDJP's Comprehensive Strategy

5. Specific Target: We must identify and seek to help those juvenile offenders who have already committed felony offenses or have not responded positively to intervention. Measures to address juvenile offenders may include placement in secure training schools, community based facilities or secure juvenile facilities. However, even the most violent or untractable juveniles should not be moved to the criminal justice system before they graduate from the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system (Howell et al., 2017)

6. Planning: We must establish intragency teams that conduct in-depth assessments of and create comprehensive case plans for serious, violent and chronic juvenile offenders. These intragency teams should include representatives from juvenile justice system, social service, child welfare, mental health, and education system (Howell et al., 2017).

"Each of these principles is explicitly supported by research in longitudinal developmental studies of children and adolescents" (Howell, 2003; Howell, Lipsey, & Wilson, 2014; Loeber, Farrington, Stouthamer-Loeber, & White, 2008, pp. 329-334; National Research Council, 2013 as cited by Howell et al., p. 4, 2014).

Individual Delinquency Prevention Programs

The next step after looking at the big picture of ODDJP's comprehensive strategy is to discover evidence-based individual programs that seemed to fit into the larger plan.

What are Evidence Based Programs?



- Tested in controlled settings
- Proven effectiveness
- Widely available
- Practical models

Advantages:

- More likely to positively impact program participants
- Less risk on investment with proven, reliable programs
- Less development of the program is required

Where Should We Start?

Family-Strengthening Delinquency Prevention

- **Family-Strengthening programs seek to intervene in the lives of juveniles from the very beginning.**
- These programs work with the problems stemming from children coming from insecure homes, abusive or neglectful parents, and/or not having positive family relationship(s).
- These programs then seek to fight these common problems that plague American families and strengthen the family environment to help juveniles thrive.



"As we work to improve our juvenile justice system, we should never forget that behind the numbers there are children—children who need love and nurturing to become caring and productive adults. Let us also recall that each of us was once a child, whose healthy development depended on our ability to trust our environment, in particular, our first environment—our family." - Shay Bilchik ODJP Administrator (1994-2000) (Kumpher, et al, p. 1, 1998).

Family is Important!

"Of all the rocks upon which we build our lives, we are reminded today that family is the most important.....You and I know how true this is in the African-American community. We know that more than half of all black children live in single-parent households, a number that has doubled — doubled — since we were children. We know the statistics — that children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely to drop out of schools and 20 times more likely to end up in prison. They are more likely to have behavioral problems, or run away from home or become teenage parents themselves. And the foundations of our community are weaker because of it " – Barack Obama Father's Day Speech (Politico Staff, 2008)



Delinquency Issues Stemming From Family Problems

Many delinquency problems that juveniles struggle with are rooted in the circumstances of their family environment.

The family is responsible for providing love and care for a child, as well as instilling a set of values, norms, beliefs, and ideals in youth (Bobboc, 2017) (Patchin, 2006)

Studies have shown that the juvenile delinquency is targeted mostly in dysfunctional family climates, (Bobboc, 2017)



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A study found that **family** and social factors act as reliable predictors of drug misuse and delinquent behavior. These findings implicate the need for preventive programs emphasizing more on **family** focused strategies. (Sogar, 2017)

Family-Strengthening Programs

- Back in 1998 Strengthening American Families Initiative identified 25 effective family strengthening programs from 500 nominated programs (Kumpher & Alvarado, 1998)
- From these findings, they found three family intervention strategies that were effective in reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors. (Kumpher & Alvarado, 1998)



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However, while these strategies produced effective results when the article was published, it is not clear if they would have the exact result today.

Family Interventions

1. Behavioural Parent Training: This training attempts to instruct parents in effective discipline techniques. Many research studies demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing coercive child-parent interactions and improving parent monitoring. (Kumpher & Alvarado, 1998).

2. Family Therapy Interventions: Family Therapy Interventions are used with families in which juveniles are manifesting behavioural problems. Family therapy improves family communication, control imbalances, and family relationships. A number of family therapy programs were effective in reducing delinquency and drug use in juveniles. Examples include Functional Family Therapy and Structural Family Therapy (Kumpher & Alvarado, 1998).



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3. Family Skills Training: Family Skill Training targets high-risk groups of children and families. These multicomponent interventions involve behavioural parent training, children social skills training, and behavioural family therapy or role-playing. These interventions improve parent-child bonding and encourage family unity and communication. They were found to affect the largest number of measured family and youth risk protective factors (Kumpher and Alvarado, 1998).

Other Evidence Based Programs

6 Day Treatment Program

The Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice has 6 Day Treatment Programs that provide a comprehensive array of community-based services for eligible youth to:

- Prevent further involvement with the juvenile justice system
 - Prevent placement out of the community
 - Integrate the youth back into the community after residential placement
- Individuals going through this program are from ages 12-17
- The programs, in all, are centered on the youth's need by utilizing an effective balance of treatment, education and graduated sanctions to redirect troubled youth.



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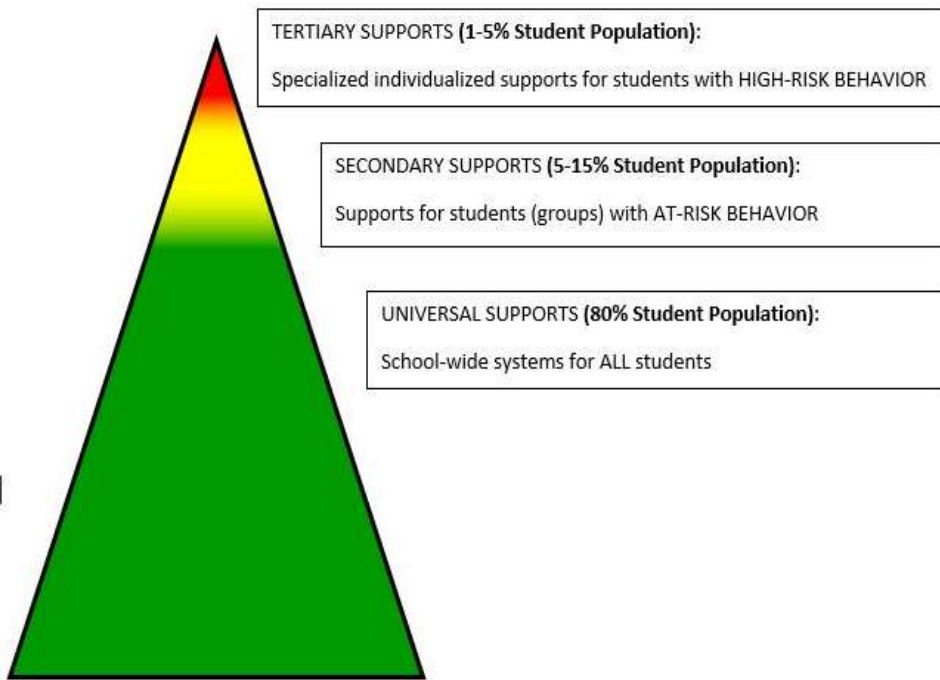
Mental Health Services

- Delinquents have experienced trauma and tragedy in and out of the prison system even after release.
- They commonly struggle to get back on their feet and lack of resources is what delinquents need in order to be better.
- Resources and support help them readjust to normal life without the chance of recidivism (repetition of misconduct even after previous misconduct).



Classroom Management

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support



- **Tertiary Supports: 5% of students**
 - Includes behavior plan, interventions, specific classroom supports, and wrap-around services (JCPS, 2018).
- **Secondary Supports: 15% of students**
 - Includes additional group interventions or specialized classroom strategies (JCPS, 2018).
- **Universal Supports: 80% of students**
 - Includes proactive classroom strategies: explicit instruction, praise, correction, and re-teaching (JCPS, 2018).

Bullying Programs

OJJDP (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention)

- **Steps To Respect:** Kids were reported having lower levels of bullying when being taught "social and emotional management skills to elementary school students." "There were lower levels of bullying outcomes in the intervention group relative to the control group." (Brown, Brian, et al., 2012).
- **Positive action:** "Treatment group students reported statistically significantly less substance use, sexual activity, violent behavior, serious violence-related behavior, and bullying behavior, compared with control group students" (Beets, Brian, et al., 2011).
- **Stop School Bullying (Greece):** "Evaluation results suggest that the program statistically significantly reduced bullying and victimization rates at schools that implemented the program compared with a ~~control~~ control group of schools that did not." (Tsiantis, Alkis, et al., 2015).

Classroom Management

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

- "PBIS is a proactive approach that schools use to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. The focus of PBIS is prevention, not punishment. At its heart, PBIS calls on schools to teach students positive behavior strategies, just as they would teach about any other subject - like reading or math" (Lee, 2020).
- Jefferson County Public Schools requires all teachers do the "Classroom Management Modules" designed to help teachers aid students
 - NOT limited to JCPS (many schools are using this approach!)

After School Programs

Effective Characteristics:

- Structure/predictable schedule
- Small adult to student ratios
- Qualified/educated staff
- Programs focus on character development and social skills

Is It Needed?

- 35% of 12-year-olds left alone while parents' work in the US
- Crime among youth's peak between 3 and 4 p.m. in the US
- Unsupervised children are more likely to use alcohol, drugs, and tobacco, and are more likely to receive poor grades, and drop out of school

Three Goals:

1. Improve academic performance
 2. Prevent problem behaviors
 3. Encourage positive youth development
-

(OJJDP, 2018)

Mentoring

"A relationship over a prolonged period of time between two or more people where an older, caring, more experienced individual provides help to the younger person as [he or she] goes through life" (CSAP 2000, 2).

DuBois et al. (2008) Meta-Analysis:

- 54 independent samples found 0.21 positive correlation between mentoring and positive behaviors including better attendance, grades, and scores on academic achievement tests

Tolan et al. (2011) Meta-Analysis:

- 20 studies of mentoring programs concluded a positive correlation of 0.23 between mentoring programs and delinquency prevention
-



What Next?



Once juveniles have been convicted of crimes and become involved in the justice system, what programs can still offer hope?

Restorative Justice

- Restorative justice is one way to help those already involved in the criminal justice system.
- Restorative justice is “A voluntary, community-based response to criminal behavior that attempts to bring together the victim, the offender, and the community, in an effort to address the harm caused by the criminal behavior” (Latimer et al., 2005, p. 131 as cited by Maryfield, 2020).



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Restorative Justice

- A 2005 meta-analysis of 19 studies involving 11,950 juvenile offenders found that restorative justice practices reduced recidivism for participating offenders. (Maryfield et al., 2020).
- Overall, the researchers found that the restorative justice practices in the analysis reduced recidivism on average by 7%. (Maryfield et al., 2020)
- However, while Restorative Justice seems to work on a small scale, results vary when it comes to the policy level. (Menkel-Meadow, 2007)



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- This research does show that when used correctly, restorative justice practices can offer hope to juveniles who have committed crimes by attempting to 'restore' the victim and offender instead of just seeking to punish the offender.

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